



U.S. Department of Justice  
United States Attorney  
District of Kansas

## NEWS RELEASE

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**ALIEN PLEADS GUILTY IN FATAL ACCIDENT**

WICHITA, Kan. – United States Attorney for Kansas Eric Melgren announced today that **Ariel Rosales**, 18, Morristown, Tenn., has pled guilty to transporting illegal aliens in a case involving the death of one of the aliens after an August 21 collision in southwest Kansas.

Melgren said that Rosales entered the guilty plea Monday before Senior U.S. District Judge Wesley E. Brown. Sentencing in the case has been set for Jan. 26, 2004, at 1:30 p.m. Rosales, who remains in federal custody, faces a maximum sentence of ten years in prison and a \$250,000 fine.

According to court documents, Rosales was hired to drive twelve Mexican nationals from Phoenix, Ariz., to Atlanta, Ga., and Newark, N.J., where they were hoping to find employment. The twelve had been led across the border into Arizona after paying a fee to alien smugglers, Melgren said. The accident occurred on U.S. 60 in Grant County, Kansas, after Rosales allegedly fell asleep at the wheel, struck an oncoming semi-trailer truck, and lost control of the pickup he was driving, according the documents filed of record in the case.

Ten illegal aliens were in the back of the pickup, which was covered by an enclosed shell, and two were in the front. Rosales, a Mexican national who was in the United States lawfully at the time, also was injured in the crash. He has been ordered deported to Mexico after he completes whatever sentence is imposed in the case, Melgren said.

The case was investigated by the Kansas Highway Patrol and the Immigration and Customs Enforcement Division of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, and is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Brent Anderson.

